Mark C. Hansen

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Although he spent just one year at University School of Milwaukee, his senior year, Mark C. Hansen ’74 thrived and took advantage of every opportunity presented to him. He immersed himself in a variety of challenging classes, participated in the ski club, played on both the football and track and field teams, sang in the choir, wrote for the school newspaper and the Bayside Herald, and even portrayed former USM history teacher Greg Morgan in the 1974 senior play “My Fair Preppie.”

After graduation, he attended Dartmouth College, where he graduated summa cum laude with highest distinction and Phi Beta Kappa. His senior honors thesis, “Royal Facts of Life: Biology and Politics in 16th Century Europe,” was published as a hardcover book in 1980. He went on to graduate cum laude from Harvard Law School in 1982, clerked for a federal appeals court judge in New York, and worked as an assistant United States attorney for the Southern District of New York.

In 1993, he and two of his law school classmates started the law firm Kellogg Hansen in Washington, D.C. Since then, the firm has grown to include more than 100 attorneys and has an extensive record of success for its clients. Mark regularly appears on lists of the country’s leading trial lawyers and is a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers. He won a $16.1 billion judgment against the Republic of Argentina, one of the largest federal court judgments ever entered.

In 2008, Mark and his wife, Anne, established the John “J.S.” Stephens Scholarship at USM, which is a full-tuition scholarship awarded each year to four academically talented Upper School students who demonstrate financial need. The gift was named in honor of Mark’s former Upper School history teacher. “The day I left USM, I understood how much J.S. had done for me,” said Hansen. “But with the passing years I’ve come to a fuller understanding of the debt, of how important it was to be challenged, stimulated, encouraged, and just simply made better by John Stephens.” Since the scholarship’s inception, 11 of the recipients have graduated from USM with four more currently enrolled in Upper School.

Mark’s generous philanthropy has played a critical role in helping advance the lives of young people at USM, and also at Dartmouth College, Bates College, Middlebury College, Bishop Walker School for Boys, Wellesley College, and more. His generosity has also extended to the Wisconsin Humane Society and the Washington, D.C. Humane Society, as well as the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., the National Women’s Law Center, the Animal Rescue League, and Door County Land Trust.

Always warm and inviting, Mark has opened his arms and heart to USM alumni of all ages by sponsoring events in the Washington, D.C. area and helping alumni reconnect with one another, their alma mater, and old friends.

Although his time at USM was short, its effect continues to resonate with Mark and the students he and Anne so generously support. “It has been a lot of fun to be involved again with USM,” he said when the scholarship was launched. “You can think of doing things like this as a duty, and probably it is in some sense. But it’s also a pleasure when you can serve an end that is important to you.”

Mark C. Hansen ’74 and his wife, Anne, are the parents of three adult children: Bailey, Caroline, and Charlie.

“Mark is not one to advertise his accomplishments, as evidenced by his many anonymous gifts to the school. But his support of USM goes far beyond repaying the one year he attended. His generosity has given many deserving students the same wonderful high school experience he received and, in turn, he has made the USM environment more diverse and inclusive.”

— Dr. Leona Chen ’74

